[This Document is the Property of Her Britannic Majesty's Government.]

F.O. 881 / 7315

Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. May, 1900.

CONFIDENTIAL.

(7315.)

S
1329

Memorandum by Mr. de Bernhardt respecting Cases of Ill-treatment by Officials in the Congo Free State.

C. O., June 26, 1891.

ON the 26th June, 1891, the Colonial Office communicated to this Office copy of a despatch from the Acting Governor of Lagos, inclosing a representation from the Rev. J. Johnson respecting the ill-treatment of certain Lagos labourers in the Congo Free State.

From this document it appears that the Agents of the Belgian Company, whose employés they were, for about six weeks after their arrival at Matadi neglected to house them, and left them at the wharf exposed to the sun, rain, heat, and cold. Six of them were fisted and imprisoned for having called upon the Chief Agent demanding to be housed and to be furnished with materials for the erection of sheds. They were afterwards led out to work chained together, as were also two others, whose offence was that they had directed to the Superintendent's office two of their friends who complained of having been beaten by some Europeans. They had been fed upon very poor fare, which, with the long exposure, had caused them all to suffer from frequent and often serious illness. Some of them had been flogged to death, and flogging had been employed to force work from them, and to punish what the Belgian Agents were pleased to call offences, amongst which might be reckoned any expression of dissatisfaction with an officer's treatment if it came to his hearing from others telling him of it. Others had been denied their liberty, although no crime had been proved against them, and had been compelled, sometimes with circumstances of cruelty, to remain in the country against their will. The Agents had changed the terms of the agreement with them in regard to having, against their will, employed them as *soldiers*, whereas they

had engaged them as *labourers*. They had withheld a portion of their pay from them and had applied it towards repayment to the Company for their subsistence, which, by the agreement, it was to provide for them at its own expense, whilst they had obliged them to sign receipts signifying that they had each and all received their pay in full, under pain of being denied the privileges and opportunity of returning to Lagos. They had paid only a portion of the return passage fare of ten of their number, who had been pronounced ill by the Company's doctor, and had refused to pay any portion whatever of that of three others, whilst, by the agreement between the Company's Agents and themselves, the Company was to pay the whole of their return passage fare.

In this document, particulars were also given regarding the deaths of four British subjects from Lagos who were said to have been flogged to death.

1. Oto *alias* Samuel Vincent fell ill four months after his arrival at Matadi, and when on a certain day he was not seen at work, and was said to have been lying down in his cabin, he was sent for by two of the Belgian Company's officers, MM. Cert and Grive, and asked why he was not at work. When he replied that he had been and still was unwell, they set upon him and beat him. Whilst they were belabouring him with their fists and sticks, blood gushed out from his mouth and nostrils. He staggered to his work-place, but was unable to hold himself up, and was compelled to stagger back to his cabin, where he was laid up more seriously ill. Nine days after he was taken to the hospital, where he died, charging, with his latest breath, the officers with having killed him.

2. Ogidan was taken ill about four months after his arrival at Matadi, and kept his bed for a time. When he was somewhat convalescent he went to the general work-place to do a little work. Feeling rather tired, he sat down to rest himself. When the Superintendent arrived on the spot, and saw him sitting, he flew into a rage, as he thought he was idling away his time, and, seizing a strong elm stick, struck him two severe blows on one of his knees and another across his waist. This threw him down. He was at once taken to a shed, whence he was afterwards removed to the hospital. He, however, expired on the way.

3. Adebiyi, about three months after his arrival at Matadi, was attacked with guinea worms, from

which he suffered most severely. On the third day of his confinement at home from it, and of his absence from work, the Belgian Supervisor, Jerome, finding him in his hut, inquired why he did not go to work. Though the young man replied he was ill, the Supervisor beat him with a stick. He repeated his inquiry and beating the next day, when the poor man died. It was the conviction of all his comrades, who had seen him a short time before he was beaten and after it, that his death was due, not to the guinea worms attack, but to the beating from the Supervisor.

4. Egunleti had been sent by his fellow labourers for drinking water at some distance from the place where they worked. As he was returning with the water, the Belgian Agent, Jerome, met him, charged him with slipping away from his work and skulking, and fell upon him with his stick. The beating he had was so severe and so affected him, that he was unable to continue his work that day. The next day he became worse and began expectorating blood, and passing it freely in his stools. On the fourth day after this he was removed to the hospital, where he expired.

On a certain occasion Chief Officer Lambert's severe and cruel beating of an Accra man became a signal for all the Accra labourers to rise *en masse* against him, and defend themselves from cruel usage. Zanzibar soldiers were then let loose upon them. These not only dealt with Accra people, many of whom they wounded and robbed of their effects, but wantonly attacked Lagos men also, entering forcibly into their cabin, wounding them, and robbing them of their possessions.

Upon this, Z. Kaitell, the foreman of the Lagos contingent, took with him his wounded comrades to Superintendent Gofer. After complaining of the unprovoked attack, he stated that the officer responsible for it—Lambert—had refused to supply them with provisions for nine days together, and requested that he and his party should be sent back to Lagos, as, besides non-compliance on the part of the Company with the agreement made with them, they had been roughly handled and cruelly used. Superintendent Gofer consented to their return, but would not pay their passage fare till the Company's doctor declared them generally unwell and unfit for the service required of them.

He, however, refused to allow Kaitell to return,

and although Kaitell paid his passage fare himself and went on board the steam-ship "Kinsembo" as a passenger by her, he sent soldiers after him to take him forcibly back ashore. These soldiers laid violent hands upon him, and one of them beat him with the butt end of his gun and inflicted severe wounds upon him. When Kaitell's comrades remarked that this treatment would klll him, an officer was heard to say, "The death of all you blacks would be no loss to the Company."

On the 28th October, 1891, the Colonial Office communicated to this Office copy of a despatch from the Acting Governor of Lagos, stating that there were 31 labourers from Lagos at Kubenda and 67 at Noki in Portuguese territory, who had fled thither from the Congo State to escape the ill-treatment of the Belgian Company.

C. O., October 28, 1891.

On the 10th March, 1892, the Colonial Office sent a copy of a Report to the Acting Colonial Secretary at Sierra Leone by Mr. A. T. Porter, who had been instructed to inquire into the treatment of Sierra Leone labourers in the Congo State. Mr. Porter considered that the quantity of food supplied to these men was sufficient, but that the fish and meat were rotten and unfit for food. When Mr. Porter mentioned to M. Goffin, the Secretary of the Railway Company, that he had heard that the men were sometimes kicked, whipped, and chained by their necks, M. Goffin shrugged his shoulders and said that was nothing.

C. O., March 10, 1892.

On the 14th July, 1892, the Colonial Office communicated copies of despatches from the Governors of the Gold Coast and Lagos on the subject of the ill-treatment of the natives of those Colonies imported into the Congo Free State for employment on the railway there.

C. O., July 14, 1892.

The Governor of Lagos observed that it was impossible to doubt from a perusal of the evidence taken by the District Commissioner, who had held an inquiry at the instance of the Director of Justice of the Congo State, that the men had been treated in a most disgraceful and inhuman manner, reflecting grave discredit on what was supposed to be a civilized Administration. The men seemed to have been improperly housed and fed. No proper provision was made for hospital treatment. There was also good ground for believing that they did not receive their full

wages. The only remedies provided for sick men were gin and turpentine, and the prevalent mode of diagnosing ailments appears to have been by sticking pins into the limbs of the unfortunate patients: oddly enough, if this unpleasant experiment were perceptible the man was supposed to be sound; if not, he was retained in hospital to be dosed with gin or rubbed with turpentine. One man declared that a pin was stuck in the white of his eye.

James Saluel deposed that he was on one occasion struck three blows by M. Sausanne (an official of the Company) with his walking stick, one on his cheek, one on his shoulder, and one on his forearm, because he had gone to work five minutes late. Another time M. Lambotte, thinking he had done some work badly, took up a stone and threw it at him, hitting him in the small of his back, but on finding out that the bad work had not been done by him, he expressed his regret for throwing the stone at him. Another time, when he was working at an extension of the line, an official came up to him and said he should have done more work. He then pushed the man into a hole, whereby his arm was hurt so that he could not work for two weeks after.

Samuel Williams deposed that the fish and meat given him were so salt that they hurt his tongue. He then became ill, and was ordered by the doctor gin every day. After three months, as he was getting no better, he asked to be sent back to Lagos, but his request was refused. His complaint was of ill-treatment, not of violence. The ill-treatment was in not taking care of him when he was ill, and in not sending him back.

James George deposed that on his arrival at Matadi he had to stay three months on the river side without any shelter. He complained also of the nature of the food given him, the salt-dried fish given him moved his bowels too much. He became ill and went to the hospital, where the doctor told him that there was only enough medicine for white men, not for black men. The only violence of which he complained was that the doctor used to stick a pin, sometimes two pins, into him up to the head, and asked him if he felt it.

Manoel Pereira had also to live for about three months at the water side without shelter; and because he complained and troubled the authorities every day at roll-call about a house, he was

one morning arrested by four soldiers, who took him to prison and placed a chain round his neck. He was kept thus for three days, when he was released and sent back to work. He also complained that the fish given him was too salt, and hurt his tongue and lip. One day, after he had been eight months in the employment of the Company, four officers and a large number of soldiers came to his house and battered down the wooden walls with stones. Then the soldiers attacked him and his companions with knives and sticks. He was cut just above the bridge of his nose. This caused him to fall, when he was twice struck on the back with sticks. The soldiers having knocked him and his companions about stole all their things, their officers being present all the time. One of his companions had his eye put out, three others, Jacob Johnson, Rufino Gonsalvo, and Eustebo dos Anjos died of the wounds they had received, and a number of others were severely wounded.

Sabino Suarez also complained that after his arrival he had to live for about three months at the river side without shelter. After four months he was taken ill, suffering from his eye and his feet, and went to the hospital, where the doctor stuck a pin into his body in five places. One day when at the hospital he went into the part of the bush which was generally used as a latrine, two officers of the railway began throwing stones at him. He deposed that he had not received his full pay, and that his clothes and tools had been all stolen from him.

Lawani also complained of having been kept for three months on the river side without shelter, and that the fish given him to eat was so salt that it hurt his tongue and caused his lip to peel. He also stated that he had not been paid any wages. He was with Manoel Pereira when his house was attacked (as stated above), and was wounded and had all his belongings stolen.

Isaiah George was kept at the water-side for two months without shelter. He complained that the rice given him was spoilt by damp, and the fish too salt and gritty. He was ill and was sent to the hospital, but was not given any medicine. The doctor stuck a pin through his tongue and also into the white of his eye. He received 9*l.* for his wages instead of 24*l.*

Sain complained that he was kept for three months after his arrival at Matadi without

shelter, and that the fish given him to eat was too salt and gritty. After eating it he passed blood in his stools. He was also present with Manoel Pereira when the soldiers attacked his house, and received several blows with sticks on his back and head. He fell down, and the soldiers struck at his face with a knife, cutting his eyebrow open.

Tom Thomas complained that he was also kept for about three months at the river side without shelter, exposed to the rain at night, and that the fish given him was gritty and too salt, and the corn damp and full of weevils. He was twice ill, and 3*s.* was deducted from his pay for every day that he was not well enough to work. When he complained of this, M. Lambotte kicked him downstairs. He was with Manoel Pereira when his house was attacked by soldiers, and received a blow with a stick on his right eye. The eyebrow was cut right across, and the lower part of the eyebrow, the eyelid, and the eyeball all fell and hung down over his cheek. He then fell down, and was stabbed in two places in his back.

Vice-Consul Bannister, No. 1, December 24, 1893.

In December, 1893, Mr. Bannister, Vice-Consul at Boma, sent home a Declaration signed in his presence by Sergeant H. Lewis, of the Houssas, in the service of the Congo Free State, and by D. Moses, late sergeant in the same service, who had accompanied Commandant Van Kerckhoven's expedition to Lado and the Upper Nile. In their Declaration it was stated that at Ulikinu 370 prisoners were taken, men, women, and a large number of children and young girls. Van Kerckhoven caused all the men and women to be tied to each other and placed in a line, and then ordered them to be shot. A friendly Chief, named Semio, begged Van Kerckhoven to spare them, but he replied that they had given him a lot of trouble, and he was tired of seeing them. He then gave the orders, and they were all shot, except one man, who managed to loose himself and run into the bush. The children were given to a King called Bitimah, and the young girls to Bitimah and Oqua.

While Mabirah, Van Kerckhoven's boy, was loading a magazine rifle for his master a charge exploded, and the bullet entered the Commandant's back and passed out at his breast. The boy immediately ran for the bush, but was caught and brought back. He was then tied to a tree and shot by order of Milz, the second in

command. All the members of the expedition were sure it was an accident, as the boy liked his master, and tried to get him off, but Milz made them shoot him.

Consul Pickersgill, No. 14, March 16, 1894.

In March 1894, Consul Pickersgill sent home a despatch from Mr. Bannister, British Vice-Consul at Boma, in which it was stated that Agents of the Congo State engaged natives of Sierra Leone, Elmina, Accra, and Lagos as *labourers*, but that on their arrival at Boma they were put into uniform, when they realized for the first time that they were to be *soldiers*, and not *labourers*. Hundreds of these men had come to the Vice-Consulate complaining bitterly, and saying that they would prefer to be shot. The frequent complaints brought to Vice-Consul Bannister of the frauds practised on these men, and of the constant abuse of corporal punishment they had to suffer through their discontent and unwillingness to don the uniform and work, had caused him much loss of time. Mr. Bannister went on to say that "the lash was used pretty freely, from 25 to 100 strokes being administered—generally 50—at the sweet will of any one who chose to make a complaint, and, apparently, in many cases, for trivial offences. The instrument used was invariably a whip of twisted hippopotamus hide."

Vice-Consul Bannister, No. 1, June 17, 1894.

In June 1894, Vice-Consul Bannister reported that on the 10th April of that year E. Mensah, a British subject, native of Accra, engaged as a *labourer* in the Congo Free State, but employed as a *soldier*, came to his Vice-Consulate and complained that the Commandant of the station had given him an order in French, which he did not understand. He asked the officer to give the order in English, whereupon the officer struck him on the head with a stick, and then had him flogged with the "chicote." After this he ran away. On the 10th April thirteen other Accra men came to the Vice-Consulate, stating that they had also been engaged as *labourers*, but had been made to do *military* duty. They had been present at Mensah's flogging, and on his flight being discovered they were all paraded by order of the officer in command, and each one ordered sixty lashes. One of their comrades had died from the effects of the flogging.

Consul Pickersgill, No. 7, January 21, 1895.

On the 21st January, 1895, Consul Pickersgill sent home a despatch from Vice-Consul Bannister, of Boma, in which he reported that a grey-headed old Headman of a gang of Elminas had come to him with two other men, carrying between them another who could not walk because he had been struck across the loins with a heavy stick and thoroughly disabled by a Captain at the Fort. For complaining to the Vice-Consul, the old Headman was himself beaten by this same Captain. On another occasion, three batches of men came to the Vice-Consulate to complain that they had more than completed their term of service, and wanted to be sent home, but that they had been made to work for their subsistence only. An hour or so afterwards they came back. Six had been beaten, and the Headman, who acted as spokesman, and who carried Vice-Consul Bannister's card, had been seized and given fifty lashes for having come to complain. One cut had gone round to his groin, and caused a big open wound.

C.O., February 11, 1895.

On the 11th February, 1895, the Colonial Office communicated copy of a despatch from the Governor of the Gold Coast, inclosing a despatch from Vice-Consul Bannister, of Boma, in which he stated that the Governor's surmise, that men were recruited at Accra (and other British Colonies) as police for the Congo State, and that "the term policeman was simply a euphemism," was quite a correct one. Mr. Bannister also informed the Governor that in the Agreements made out between the Congo State and labourers, the term "*labourer*" was also a euphemism for soldier; that he had had hundreds of complaints, and was still occupied with grave charges of cruelty practised on these men by officers of the State, who stopped short at nothing in brutality under the guise of discipline. Fourteen Accra men had been sent by the Commandant of the place to raid a town and seize men to be sent to Boma as recruits. If the men ran away on their approach, the women were to be seized and held as hostages until the men turned up. Five women were brought to camp. The Chief came in and released the women, and then complained that two of them had been outraged on the road and that a duck had been stolen. The Accra men were paraded, and then fifty lashes were administered to each. One died some few days

afterwards, and the Commandant made out that it was "from fever." In the meantime, before the Chief of the town appeared, a brother of his, who happened to be away at the time of the raid, appeared at the camp and was seized. On being questioned as to the whereabouts of the Chief, he simply said he knew nothing, as he had been away. The Commandant ordered his boy to bring a table knife, and cut an ear off the native, which was promptly done. This and the flogging so frightened the Accra men that they ran away. They were each sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment for having "deserted." On getting a copy of their Agreement, Vice-Consul Bannister discovered that they were all described as "labourers;" and he informed the Governor of the Gold Coast that he was doing all he could to procure the release of these men.

Consul Pickersgill, Separate, May 27, 1895.

On the 27th May, 1895, Consul Pickersgill reported that an Accra soldier named Coffee had complained to Vice-Consul Bannister of having been during drill struck on the arm with a stick by Captain Caimo, who had the reputation of being a cruel disciplinarian of violent temper. The nature of the wound was not described by Mr. Bannister, but Consul Pickersgill felt certain that it was not trifling, as Africans in the service of the Congo State were not accustomed to consider mere slaps and pushes as matters for complaint. The Vice-Consul wrote to the Commandant, insisting upon an inquiry. After many postponements a public trial took place, at which the Vice-Consul was allowed to appear as counsel for the complainant. In consequence of some discrepancies in the statements of the coloured witnesses for the prosecution, with regard to the manner in which the blow was given, the defendant was acquitted. The Judge, in summing up, characterized the complainant and his witnesses as "designing black men," and said that he "sympathized with a gallant Belgian Captain for having been brought to trial on the charge of beating a black." Consul Pickersgill described the trial as "an unsatisfactory affair."

Sir F. Plunkett, No. 187, August 31, 1895.

C. H. Stokes, a British subject, engaged in trading with natives and Arabs in the Congo Free State, was, on the 14th January, 1895, brought before the court-martial of the Arab zone,

of which Major Lothaire was president, charged with furnishing arms and ammunition to certain Arab bands who were in revolt against the Government of the Congo State. He was sentenced to death, and hanged on the next day at the station of Lindi.

Memorandum, Sir H. P. Anderson, August 21, 1895.

Captain Salisbury informed Sir H. P. Anderson that Stokes had been caught unawares, sentenced by a drumhead court-martial, the proceedings of which he could not understand, and which could not understand his defence, taken out at 4 in the morning, and hung. Captain Salisbury said that he had not met with a single Belgian employé who did not say that it was indefensible, and that Stokes should, as he asked, have been sent down the Congo to Boma.

Acting Consul Nightingale, No. 22, August 26, 1895.

In August 1895 Mr. Nightingale sent home a written statement, made by Mr. E. Matook before Mr. Underwood, who was Acting Vice-Consul at Boma, respecting the treatment of British subjects by officers of the Congo Free State. Mr. Underwood feared that, from private information he had received, this statement was only too true.

Mr. Matook stated that most of the men from Sierra Leone, who had been engaged by the Congo State as *labourers*, had been made to sign engagements as *soldiers*. Being uneducated, they did not know what they were signing. They were given a suit of clothes free on arrival, but afterwards they had to clothe themselves. On the expiration of their term of service some of them were almost obliged to sign a contract for one or two years more, and sometimes they were deceived by being promised wives, they not knowing that they would have to pay 12*l.* for this luxury. Those men who were appointed to the Upper Congo were conveyed in lighters, towed by steamers, exposed the whole day to the burning sun or rain, and as soon as the vessels anchored they had to cut wood from the bush up to 10 or 11 P.M. They were badly fed, and had no doctors or medicine. Many died from hunger and fatigue before they arrived at their stations. He reported that one man from Sierra Leone had had several ribs broken through being beaten with a thick stick by M. Vanderlyn.

J. Johnson, a corporal from Sierra Leone, was unjustly accused of stealing caps, for which he was

reduced to the ranks and sentenced to two years' "pamba" (an expression used in the Congo State signifying to work as a soldier without pay).

Adebity Howsa was sentenced to five years' "pamba" for losing his gun through no fault of his own, and M. Dwarwonié to two years' "pamba" for a similar reason. Henry Mokoli, Commanda, Blaky-Leon, and James Makoti were all shot by order of Commandant Francqui, the first two for petty theft and the other two for losing cartridges.

Tom Teopi Howsa was sentenced to a year's imprisonment with hard labour for buying a fowl, the blacks in the Congo State being forbidden to purchase fowls, which are reserved for white men.

Henry Lewis, a sergeant-major, was reduced to the ranks and put in chains for threatening to inform the Consul at Boma of the treatment which his fellow countrymen were receiving at the hands of the Congo officials.

A soldier, Howsa, after five years' service, was accused of attempting to steal a gun, and was shot by order of Lieutenant Meuse.

S. L. Fourbe was sentenced to two years' "pamba" by Captain Hecque for refusing to go alone with a message through a dangerous country.

Fiolos Williams was sentenced by Commandant Francqui to transportation for life for sitting down whilst mounting guard, he being unwell at the time.

Baldwin was also sentenced to transportation for life for sleeping when on duty.

Sedon was sentenced by Commandant Francqui to ten years' imprisonment for picking up cartridges fallen from other soldiers.

Newspaper was sentenced to two years' "pamba" for firing more cartridges than he should have fired.

Jeem Bram was sentenced to four years' "pamba" for having bought fowls which Captain Francqui claimed were reserved for white men only.

Tomy was sentenced to transportation for life for losing cartridges and killing a white man's dog.

A soldier from Sierra Leone was sentenced to carry on his head for six days a roll of "latten" weighing 34 kilog., and because on the fifth day he let it fall off he was ordered 100 lashes with the "chicote" by Lieutenant Woulghe.

Mr. Matook described the state of the British subjects serving as soldiers in the Upper Congo as horrible; they were naked and starving. If

they sold cartridges to the natives in order to buy food they were shot.

Captain Arthur, No. 26, July 20, 1896.

On the 20th July, 1896, Captain Arthur, Her Majesty's Consul at Boma, reported that Captain Francqui was in the habit of sending out small parties of troops under a non-commissioned officer, for the purpose of demanding ivory and india-rubber from the villages; if these articles were not forthcoming he would dispatch another armed party to attack the natives. On the return of the party, the non-commissioned officer in charge would report that so many natives had been killed. This, however, would not satisfy Captain Francqui, who demanded proofs in the form of human hands that the number stated had been killed; and the armed party would again be sent out for this purpose, returning in due course with the right hands of the natives who had been killed, and having seized whatever ivory and india-rubber could be found.

Captain Arthur also transmitted the original sworn evidence of a British subject named Henry Lewis, a native of Lagos, and late sergeant-major in the Force Publique of the Congo State, which confirmed generally the statements of Matook (above quoted), and showed that great barbarities had been practised, both on soldiers and on the natives. Men were said to have been shot without trial for alleged loss of their rifles; in some cases no trouble was taken to ascertain whether the rifles were really lost, but in others it was possible that they sold them to get food, as they were often nearly starving.

Lewis also stated that Captain Francqui wanted to shoot a Houssa soldier named Oloyede for remaining in a village all night (where he had gone to buy food), as it was too late to get back to the station. He (Lewis) told Captain Francqui that he could not do so, and ordered the Houssas to lay down their arms and to refuse to work if he shot Oloyede. Captain Francqui then sent Lewis to Djabbir with a letter to Captain Foulon. When he had delivered the letter Captain Foulon put him in chains. He received no food from the station, but was provided with some secretly by Matook. One evening his wife brought him something to eat to the prison. She was seen doing so, and Captain Francqui ordered her 100 lashes. She was flogged with a hippopotamus whip by one of the soldiers, and Captain Foulon

witnessed the punishment. After being thirty-three days in prison Lewis was released by advice of the doctor.

The Parliamentary Debates, vol. xlvii, pp. 429–431.

On the 2nd April, 1897, in a debate in the House of Commons respecting Africa, Sir C. Dilke made a speech, in which he accused the Congo State of "habitually raiding with cannibal allies." He stated that the latest expedition of Baron Dhamis had been led by six white officers, of whom one was Captain Lothaire, and comprised 500 Houssas and *25,000 cannibal allies.* The force had been rationed for months upon smoked human flesh. His authority for this was Captain Hinde, a devoted friend of Baron Dhamis. Sir C. Dilke went on to say that British subjects had been employed, without their consent, as soldiers, cruelly flogged, and in some cases shot. "Shot," as Captain Hinde had explained to him, also meant "eaten."

Consul Pickersgill, June 1, 1897.

On the 1st of June, 1897, Consul Pickersgill drew up a Report on the "Congo Atrocities," in which he stated that on the 10th October, 1896, the Congo State soldiers attacked the village of Bandakea Wijiko because the rubber brought by the villagers to the State was not of the best quality. Fifty natives were killed and 28 taken prisoners. Among the prisoners were 16 women, who were tied together neck to neck, with just sufficient room between them to allow them to walk. Some of these women were carrying little children; one had two, one on her back and one in her arms. All the bodies of those who were killed had the right hand cut off. At Lulonga the natives had collected the quantity of rubber required of them, but had been prevented from delivering it at the Government post through finding an intermediate town at war with the State. An English missionary, named Randall, undertook to write to the Commissaire to explain the delay. Instead of a reply to his letter a party of soldiers arrived, who were so bent on bloodshed, that he only succeeded in preventing it for a few moments by insisting on their leader taking note that the rubber had been collected. Whilst this brief check was occurring, the soldiers spread through the village and began to fire. Most of the people, however, escaped into the forest, but seven were killed. No hands were taken on this occasion, but one was cut off and

thrown away. Another missionary, named Clark, reported that on the beach of Ikobo a man and woman had been tied together by a State officer and shot, for what reason Mr. Clark never learnt. A Commissaire, named Fièvе, is said to have caused more than 1,000 persons to be mutilated. Mr. Pickersgill has affixed to his Report the photograph of a small boy with his right hand cut off, who was one of these victims. As a result of these cruelties, people fled from the district by thousands.

The above are all the instances of ill-treatment in the Congo Free State down to the end of the year 1898 which I have been able to discover; the correspondence subsequent to this date is not in the custody of the Library.

GASTON DE BERNHARDT.

Foreign Office,
April 28, 1900.

CONFIDENTIAL.

MEMORANDUM by Mr. de Bernhardt respecting Cases of Ill-treatment by Officials in the Congo Free State.

Foreign Office,
April 28, 1900.

May, 1900. May 1900. TS Selected Foreign Office Files on Africa. The National Archives (Kew, United Kingdom). Nineteenth Century Collections Online. Web. 2 May 2016.

URL
http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/3Lfki6